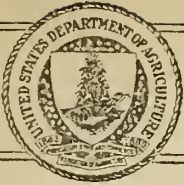
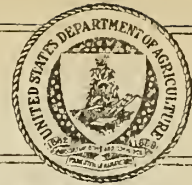


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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Office of Information
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WASHINGTON, D. C.

RELEASE FOR PUBLICATION

September 2, 1936 (WEDNESDAY)

THE MARKET BASKET

by

Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture

THE WELL-PREPARED MEAL

Probably the best meat buys just now, say the market specialists, are fore-quarter cuts of beef and lamb. Among the vegetables are fresh tomatoes, sweet corn, green beans, limas, fresh cabbage, cucumbers, eggplant, okra, squash -- almost all the tempting summer garden crops, of each locality. Among the fruits, we have grapes, pears, plums, melons, peaches. From such a variety it is not difficult to select most of the makings of a good meal. Add bread and butter, milk, coffee or tea, supply some seasonings, and whether the dinner is good now depends upon how it is prepared.

To prepare a good meal from well-chosen materials, says the Bureau of Home Economics of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, means knowing how to get the best results not only with each food by itself but with all of them together. That last point is important, for it involves timing, so that everything will be cooked to a turn and ready to serve without having to stand. It also means making each food do its bit for variety. We don't want two creamed vegetables at one meal, for example, because the white sauce used for creaming makes them too much alike in texture and often obscures the flavor. Nor do we want two fried foods, because that means too much fat and too much of the browned flavor. Variety of texture, flavor, and color depend on well chosen methods of preparation as well as upon the raw material.

A simple menu, easy for the housewife to prepare, is usually best, provided it is well chosen. Suppose, for example, a dinner from these materials: Beef, sweet corn, green beans, tomatoes, lettuce, and a fruit. Bread, milk, coffee or tea.

With an eye to cost, let us have swiss steak. It is a favorite and it utilizes one of the cheaper cuts of beef -- a fairly thick piece from the chuck, rump, or round. It is made tender by slow cooking in a little water and under cover, so that it is really steamed or braised. Directions for "swissing" a steak, as given by the Bureau of Home Economics, are as follows:

Season the meat with salt and pepper, sprinkle generously with flour, and pound thoroughly. The pounding helps to make the meat tender, and the flour absorbs the juice. Cut the steak into individual portions and brown in suet or other fat in a heavy skillet. Then add water enough to cover. Partly cover with a lid, and simmer for 1-1/2 to 2 hours, or until the meat is tender enough to cut with a fork. There should be plenty of good gravy to serve over the meat.

Of the vegetables for this dinner, the corn and beans will be cooked, the others served raw. The "roastin' ears", which can not live up to that name when prepared in a kitchen, are just as good cooked in water and served on the cob. After all bits of silk and of shuck have been carefully taken off, drop the ears of corn into a kettle of boiling water and let them simmer, uncovered, for 5 to 15 minutes, the longer time for close or deep-grain ears. But do not cook too long, or the corn will toughen, and if white corn, it will turn yellow if the water is hard.

If the corn is to be cut off before serving, one way is to cook it first on the cob, then with a very sharp knife cut it off as close as possible without getting particles of the cob. Reheat over hot water and serve. Add a piece of butter

and sprinkle with salt. For a creamier dish, cut the grains off the cob before cooking, and cook over hot water, seasoning with butter, salt and pepper, and perhaps chopped pepper.

Green beans, because they are green and succulent, make a pleasant contrast to sweet corn, and are best when cooked by the simplest method. Get them as fresh from the garden as possible, wash them thoroughly, remove the strings, and the tips, and break or cut them in short pieces. Drop them into a small quantity of boiling water. To preserve their green color, cook them uncovered, and until just tender but still a little crisp. That will take probably 15 or 20 minutes. Best of all ways, if time permits, is to shred the beans -- i.e., cut them lengthwise, either with a knife or with a bean shredder, thus getting rid of the strings. Season green beans with butter, pepper and salt, or with crisp bits of salt pork or bacon.

The tomatoes, which are at their best just now, we will use in a raw salad of lettuce and tomatoes, to supply textures, flavors, and colors not furnished by either of the cooked vegetables. The lettuce must be cool and crisp, the tomato ripe and fresh. Dip it in hot water long enough to loosen the skin, remove the skin and chill the tomato. Just before serving time cut the tomato in quarters which hold together at the stem end. Serve in the midst of curling lettuce leaves, the tomato sections opening at the top. French dressing - plain or with roquefort cheese crumbled into it - and a crisp cracker go with this cool salad.

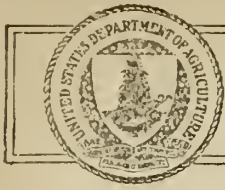
With fruit for dessert, there are such choices now in different parts of the country as fresh grapes, pears, plums, melon and peaches. Pears are good baked, and served with hot little cup cakes. Peaches should be sliced just before serving and sprinkled with sugar, to keep them, so far as possible, from turning dark before they are used. Melons should be thoroughly cooled before cutting; or, with cut surfaces protected, the pieces should be put in a refrigerator. Cracked

ice in half a cantaloup or honey ball washes out the flavor and makes the flesh soft and watery.

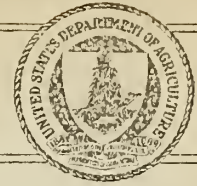
Where damsons or other plums are to be had, plum pie might well be the dessert for this dinner. But fruit pies are sometimes hard to make. For such juicy fruits, one way to avoid a soggy pie crust, says the Bureau of Home Economics, is to bake the bottom crust first, very lightly, then put in the filling, and cover the pie with a thin layer of pastry, which is then turned over the edge of the bottom crust, and the pie put in the oven again. Slashes in the upper crust allow the steam to escape as the pie cooks. Bake until the crust is nicely browned. A good fruit pie has a tender, flaky crust which holds the juice without soaking it up, and bakes without any of the juice running over on the top crust. Fruit pie is exceedingly good served hot.

A good grape pudding is made of concord grape juice and pulp thickened with tapioca until it is jelly-like but soft enough to drop from a spoon. This makes a simple and attractive dessert because of its rich grape flavor and deep color. Topped with whipped cream it is still more attractive.

The simplest bread for this dinner would be thin slices or little rolls. Hot biscuit might be more attractive -- little biscuit, nicely browned.



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Office of Information
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WASHINGTON, D. C.

RELEASE FOR PUBLICATION
SEPTEMBER 9, 1936 (WEDNESDAY)

THE MARKET BASKET

by

Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture

SEPTEMBER CANNING AND PRESERVING

The home canner is busy now with tomatoes, corn and maybe okra. She may also have plums, pears, and grapes, and in some northern sections peaches. For preserves and sweet pickle there is still watermelon and the little citron melon which is just coming on. For preserves and jelly, there are quinces. Green tomatoes, peppers, and onions are on hand for pickling, and corn and okra for drying as well as canning. Dried corn is one of the best of all dried vegetables, say many people--better than canned corn, they think. And dried okra is a good addition to soups.

Tomatoes, however, are in one way the most important of all the canning crops, says the Bureau of Home Economics of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, and they are at the same time the easiest to can. They are important because they rank first among the vegetables as sources of vitamin C, and retain more of their vitamin value than any other vegetable after canning. This makes them doubly useful for the table in winter time, when fresh vegetables and fresh fruits may be more difficult to get or more expensive. Tomatoes and oranges, in fact, are the best sources of vitamin C at any time of year, and for this reason the juice is given regularly to babies, especially bottle-fed babies. It is an "anti-scorbutic" in other words, it prevents scurvy, which shows itself first in sore gums. Orange juice contains more vitamin C than tomato juice, recent tests in the Bureau of

Home Economics show--two or three times as much as tomato juice--but tomatoes are usually a cheaper source. They cost less than oranges for the same amount of vitamin C, and they can be used in more different ways.

Canned tomatoes--home canned or factory canned--are probably richer in vitamin C than tomato juice canned alone, says the Bureau of Home Economics. For vitamin values, therefore, the best and cheapest way to get the juice is to strain it off the canned tomatoes. But serve it at once. Don't let it stand uncovered, because it loses vitamin value when exposed to the air for any length of time.

The Bureau gives directions for canning tomatoes as follows:

Select firm, ripe tomatoes of medium size and uniform shape, free from spots and decay. Put into trays or shallow layers in wire baskets and dip in boiling water for about a minute, according to ripeness. Then plunge quickly into cold water, drain, peel, and core promptly. Pack into the containers as closely as possible. Fill with hot tomato juice and add 1 teaspoon of salt per quart. If using tin cans, exhaust them 5 to 6 minutes before sealing. Process in a boiling water bath, 45 minutes for pint or quart glass jars, 35 minutes for No.2 and 3 tin cans.

Or cut the tomatoes in quarters, heat just to boiling, and pack hot, and process 5 minutes.

Corn is one of the most difficult vegetables to can successfully because it contains little or no acid, and makes such a dense pack that it is hard to heat sufficiently hot all through to destroy the organisms that cause it to spoil. For this reason, the Bureau of Home Economics emphasizes, canned corn should be processed in a pressure canner, and not in a water bath. In particular, do not rely on an oven. However hot the oven itself, the corn never gets above the boiling point, which is not hot enough to sterilize a thick, pasty mass like corn.



Drying corn is not at all difficult, and the product is excellent. The directions are:

Gather the corn when in the milk stage, but gather only as much at a time as can be handled immediately, and do not allow to stand in a warm place, because corn deteriorates rapidly under those conditions. Husk and trim the ears with a knife to remove any worm injuries, but silking is unnecessary. Place in wire baskets or wire-bottom boxes and plunge them into boiling water for 8 to 12 minutes, for "blanching", that is, until the milk is "set" and no fluid escapes when the grains are cut across. As the younger corn takes a longer time for blanching than do the more mature ears, divide the corn for husking into older and younger lots.

After blanching, empty the corn upon a table, let it drain and cool enough to handle, then cut the grains from the cobs with a strong, sharp knife. Spread the kernels $1\frac{1}{2}$ to $3\frac{3}{4}$ inch deep upon trays for drying. For best results, begin drying at rather high temperature (165° to 175° F.), and lower this as the corn becomes nearly dry. Stir from time to time to keep the grains separate and permit them to dry easily. Properly dried corn is hard and transparent, and the kernels break with a clean, glass-like fracture. A drier to use over a cookstove can be made of a packing box with cleats to hold the trays apart.

Pears for canning -- Kieffers in the South and central regions, Bartletts in the North -- are at the height of their season now. Kieffers, by the way, gathered when just mature but not ripe, are much better if stored before canning for 2 to 2- $\frac{1}{2}$ weeks at a temperature of 60 to 65 degrees. That is about the temperature of a cellar or a basement room at this time of the year, and this treatment "mellows" the Kieffers and gives them flavor. Seckel pears, now ripening, are best for pickling.

Green Gage plums are on hand now, and in the more northern sections there will soon be damsons. Grapes are coming along in the middle northerly sections -- slipskin grapes, especially Concords. The New York and other northern crops will follow in October. In Michigan and New York, and some other northern areas, there will be peaches all through September -- yellow freestones for canning and preserving.

Pears, plums, peaches -- all the fruits, in fact -- do not require processing in a pressure cooker. Because of the acid they contain, the fruits and acid vegetables such as tomatoes can be safely processed in a boiling water bath.

Grapes and quinces are the best fall fruits for jelly because they contain both the pectin and the acid necessary for jelly making. Grape jelly does, of

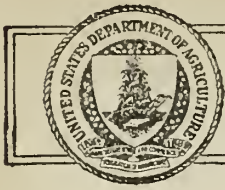
course, present the problem of "spikes", or crystals which form in grape juice. But this can be prevented by allowing the juice to stand overnight in a cold place, preferably a refrigerator, and then siphoning it off into another container or straining it. Or the juice may be canned and allowed to stand for some weeks before making it into jelly.

Forsweet pickle, the fruits this month are Seckel pears, peaches and water-melon rind -- pickled by cooking in a sweet-sour, spicy sirup. And there are green tomatoes, which make such good dilled pickle and dilled sweet pickle, or may be long-brined to make into mixed pickles.

For dilled green tomatoes, place a layer of dill, fresh or dried, and about 2 ounces of mixed pickle spices in the bottom of a 5-gallon crock and fill the crock with green tomatoes to within 4 or 5 inches of the top. This will take about 40 to 50 tomatoes of medium, uniform size, which should be fresh picked, well washed, and drained. Over the tomatoes pour a brine made of 1 pound of salt, 2 gallons of water, 1 pint of vinegar, 4 tablespoons of sugar. Then place a layer of dill on top and cover with a heavy plate to hold the tomatoes under the brine. Use only enough brine to cover, or the liquid drawn from the tomatoes will make the jar overflow. Each day remove the scum that forms over the top and keep the pickles at even room temperature, about 70 degrees or even as warm as 86 degrees if possible.

In about 2 weeks the pickles are ready to use -- crisp, well flavored with dill, and clear throughout, with no white spots when cut. To store them, pack the cured pickles in sterilized quart glass jars, and add 1/2 cup of vinegar to each. Fill up the jars with pickle brine, but first strain it, bring to the boil, and cool. Seal the jars airtight and store in a cool dry place. These dilled tomatoes may be made into sweet pickle if desired, by slicing them thin and packing them in a sweet-sour sirup seasoned with spices, tarragon and olive oil.

INFORMATION FOR THE PRESS



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE Office of Information Press Service



WASHINGTON, D. C.

Release for Publication
September 16, 1936 (Wednesday)

THE MARKET BASKET

by

Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture

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DIETS TO FIT THE FAMILY INCOME

"Diets to fit the family income" is the title of the latest publication of the Bureau of Home Economics of the United States Department of Agriculture, a pamphlet offered free on request to the Department as long as the supply lasts. Its 38 pages contain suggestions for getting the most in food value for given costs, and the diets are planned, including typical menus, for family incomes ranging from a comfortable level down to \$600 a year or less.

These suggestions are comprised in four diet patterns, under which are grouped the foods and the probable costs for families of different size and make-up. The costs apply only where all the food for the family is bought - therefore not to families who have their own garden and therefore may have a much better diet for the price. The four diet patterns are labeled "a liberal diet", "a moderate-cost adequate diet", "a minimum-cost adequate diet", and "a restricted diet for emergency use". The authors are Rowena Schmidt Carpenter, associate home economist, and Hazel K. Stiebeling, senior food economist, in the Economics Division of the Bureau of Home Economics.

It is nothing new, of course, for the Department of Agriculture to figure out nutritive values in terms of money. A distinguished biological chemist, Dr. W. O. Atwater, began it forty odd years ago, in one of the early Farmers' Bulletins. The present pamphlet applies the results of his work and other nutrition

studies since that time, relating food values to market prices of the foods.

The purpose of this publication is not only to serve economy and convenience in buying groceries, although it should do that. As one of the authors points out, "diets good enough to keep families in average health may not be good enough to promote their best health, or to enable individuals to attain the best physical development of which they are capable". In other words, for rich or poor, it is always important to get the most in nutritive value for the money spent, as well as the most in satisfaction otherwise. To that more vital purpose of good health, this pamphlet furnishes a guide.

In all these diet plans the first consideration is nutritive value - both in quantity and variety. Each plan draws from the same 12 groups of food, because this is the easiest and surest way to make a diet that is well balanced. The groups are (1) milk in its various forms; (2) potatoes and sweetpotatoes; (3) tomatoes and citrus fruits; (4) leafy, green, and yellow vegetables; (5) dried beans, peas, and nuts; (6) dried fruits; (7) other vegetables and fruits not mentioned above; (8) eggs; (9) lean meat, poultry, and fish; (10) flour, baked goods, and assorted cereals; (11) fatty-foods, such as butter, margarines, lard, oil, vegetable shortenings, salt pork, and bacon; and (12) sugars, including jams, jellies, honey, sirups, and molasses.

The quantities of food needed by families of different size and make-up will vary with the sex, age, and activity of the different members of the family.

For each person, however, a well-balanced liberal diet would include:

Milk:

One quart daily for each child (to drink or in cooked food).
One pint for each adult (to drink or in cooked food).

Vegetables and fruits:

Six to seven servings daily.
One serving daily of potatoes or sweetpotatoes.
One serving daily of tomatoes or citrus fruits.

Two and one-half to three servings daily of vegetables, at least half of which are leafy, green, or yellow kinds.
Nine to ten servings a week of fruit (once a day, sometimes twice).

Eggs:

Four to six a week; also some in cooking.

Meat, fish, or poultry:

Once a day; sometimes twice.

Butter:

At every meal.

Bread, cereals, and desserts:

As needed to meet calorie requirements, or as desired so long as they do not displace the protective foods.

A day's meals on this liberal pattern might include:

Breakfast -- Sliced oranges; hot cereal (children); soft-cooked eggs; whole-wheat toast; milk (children); coffee (adults).

Lunch or supper -- Cream of potato soup; toast; avocado-orange salad, French dressing; milk (children).

Dinner -- Baked ham, raisin sauce; sweetpotatoes; brussels sprouts; hot biscuits, Waldorf salad; chocolate honey cake; milk for all.

But a much cheaper diet could be made up from the same 12 groups of foods, and yet meet all food requirements of the family. This could be done by using a large quantity of cereal products and milk as the basis of the diet, with just enough of vegetables, fruits, eggs, and lean meats to supply vitamins, minerals, and protein not adequately furnished by bread and milk, and enough fats and sweets to make up the necessary energy requirements (calories). This, however, means choosing carefully to get the cheapest of the most nutritious foods. It means 3 or 4 servings of vegetables and fruit per person daily instead of 6 or 7 as in the liberal diet; meat (the cheaper cuts) or fish 3 or 4 times a week instead of once or twice a day; and a simple dessert about once a day.

It would allow meals something like this:

Breakfast -- Sliced peaches (adults); orange or tomato juice (young children); hot whole-wheat cereal; toast; milk (children); coffee (adults).

Lunch or supper -- Savory beans; poached eggs (young children); bread and butter; fresh grapes or pears; milk (children); coffee (adults).

Dinner -- Meat and cereal loaf (ground beef or liver); scalloped potatoes; buttered beets with beet tops; bread and butter; hot gingerbread; milk (children).

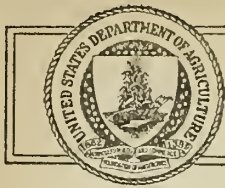
Next day's meals might then be, using some left-overs:

Breakfast -- Rolled oats; tomato or orange juice (young children); French toast, molasses; milk (children); coffee (adults).

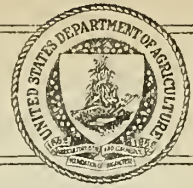
Lunch or supper -- Vegetable curry with rice; bread and butter; left-over gingerbread; tea (adults); milk (children).

Dinner -- Cold meat loaf (left-over); crusty fried potatoes; creamed cabbage; bread and butter; milk (children).

The housekeeper needs all her skill to plan these low-cost meals to include the necessary food values and at the same time make them interesting. The Bureau of Home Economics, in this new publication, tries to help her by offering market lists and menus for a week.



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Office of Information
Press Service



WASHINGTON, D. C.

RELEASE FOR PUBLICATION
SEPTEMBER 23, 1936 (WEDNESDAY)

THE MARKET BASKET

by

Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture

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CANNING MEATS AND CHICKEN

The Bureau of Home Economics of the U. S. Department of Agriculture announces a new edition of its bulletin on home canning. Including directions for canning meats and chicken as well as fruits and vegetables, with up-to-date information on home canning equipment of all kinds, and other additions to the earlier text, this new edition appears as Farmers' Bulletin 1762, under the title "Home Canning of Fruits, Vegetables, and Meats". Single copies of the bulletin may be obtained free on request to the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

Although the fruit and vegetable canning season is now closing, the new sections of the bulletin will be useful for canning chickens, and for canning beef, pork, and other meats later on. In many poultry flocks there are still hens that were not culled during the summer, when the usual time for disposing of most of most of the nonlayers. These provide the best meat for canning. They are hens about 2 years old which on the market sell as "fowl" or "stewing chickens". They have much more meat than young chickens, and the canning process, with its long cooking, makes them tender. In fact, the young chickens, the broilers and fryers, so good when cooked and served immediately, when canned are not as good as the older birds in either flavor or texture.

Meat canning, however, says the Bureau of Home Economics, must be done with

a pressure canner. It is not safe to rely on the boiling-water bath, the oven, or the steamer. None of these can heat the food beyond the boiling point (212°F.) and boiling hot is not hot enough for meat, because it takes a much higher temperature to make sure of killing the bacteria which cause meat to spoil, and which may also cause food poisoning. For safety, use the pressure canner, and process canned meats and chicken at 250° F. Without a pressure canner, it is better not to can the meat, but to preserve it some other way.

Chickens and all meat animals intended for canning should be slaughtered and handled in a thoroughly sanitary way. And unless the meat is to be canned at once, it should be thoroughly chilled - otherwise, decomposition begins within a few hours. Freezing meat before canning is not advisable, however -- the canned product then is not so good.

Canning utensils of enamelware, aluminum, retinned metal, or stainless metal are best. Do not use copper or iron, which may discolor the meat. And do not allow the meat to lie in contact with galvanized iron more than 30 minutes, or it may take up harmful quantities of zinc. Wooden utensils or wooden surfaces require special care to free them of bacteria. Scrub them with soapy water to remove all grease, and rinse in boiling water. If they are used for several days at a stretch, disinfect them with hypochlorite solution (calcium, potassium, or sodium hypochlorite) after scrubbing and scalding. Use plain tin cans or glass jars for canning meats and poultry. Chicken is more likely than are other meats to discolor tin cans, and sometimes there is a deposit on the chicken itself, but discoloration will be least if the chicken is packed hot and if proper headspace is left in the containers.

The most suitable sizes of containers are No. 2 and No. 2-1/2 tin cans, and



pint glass jars. Larger sizes require much heavier processing and are not recommended.

Directions for Canning Chicken

Select plump hens, 2 years old or a little over. Dress them as for cooking, and take particular care not to break the gall bladder because the meat is then unfit for canning. Also remove the lungs, kidneys, and eggs. Cut the chicken into the usual-sized pieces for serving and separate into three piles -- the meaty pieces (breasts, thighs, legs, and upper-wing joints), the bony pieces (backs, wings, necks, and perhaps the feet after they have been skinned), and the giblets.

The giblets should not be canned with the other meat as they will flavor and discolor it. Also, it is better to can the livers alone, and the gizzards and hearts together. Remove the chicken skin or not, as desired, and trim off lumps of fat. Too much fat makes chicken difficult to process.

Make broth with the bony pieces. Cover with lightly salted cold water, simmer until the meat is tender, and drain off the broth to use as the liquid in canning the meaty pieces. Strip the meat from the bones, and can as small pieces to use in making sandwich spread.

If desired add 5 tablespoons of granulated gelatin to each quart of broth. Moisten the gelatin first with a little of the cold liquid and dissolve in the hot broth.

The meaty pieces of chicken may be canned either with or without the bone. The flavor is better with the bone. For canning in glass, one way is to precook the chicken in a moderate oven (350° F.), pack hot and cover with pan drippings or with boiling water. Another way is to parboil the chicken, pack hot, and cover with broth. In either case, cook the chicken until the raw color has almost disappeared at the center of the piece. Add 1/2 teaspoon of salt to the pint jar, and leave headspace of 1/2 inch. Partially seal and place the jars in the pressure

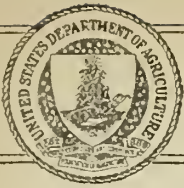


canner. Process at 250° F., or 15 pounds pressure, for 65 minutes if the chicken is canned with the bone, 85 minutes for boned chicken.

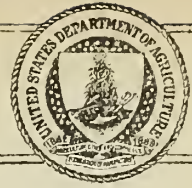
The same procedure may be used for canning in tin, except that No. 2 tin cans require 5/16 inch headspace, and the filled cans should be immediately sealed, then processed. In cans of this size chicken with bone should be processed for 55 minutes, boned chicken for 85 minutes.

To precook the chicken in tin cans, place the filled cans, open, in a boiling-water bath that comes to within 1-1/2 to 2 inches of the top of the can. Cover the bath to hold in steam and heat, being careful that the water does not bubble into the cans. Continue heating until the meat is steaming hot, or 170° F. at the center of the cans, and has practically lost its raw color. To make sure of this without a thermometer, turn out the meat from a few of the cans. When the meat is cooked, press it down in the cans, to be sure it is covered with broth, and that there is proper headspace -- 5/16 inch for No. 2 tin cans. Seal and process at once, 55 minutes for No. 2 cans of chicken with bone, 85 minutes for boned chicken. In altitudes over 2000 feet, add 1 pound of pressure for each additional 2000 feet.

INFORMATION FOR THE PRESS



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Office of Information
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WASHINGTON, D. C.

RELEASE FOR PUBLICATION
SEPT. 30, 1936 (WEDNESDAY)

THE MARKET BASKET

by

Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture

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WHAT PROPORTION FOOD IN THE FAMILY BUDGET

Are we spending a fair proportion of our income for food? What percentage in the budget should we allow each week to keep us well fed?

These are questions that many family budgeteers are putting to themselves and to the home economists as they check the budget made last January against the record of actual expenditures for the last nine months. Now at the start of the final quarter of the year is an opportune time to look backward and forward and to make adjustments in the spending plan if necessary.

To serve as a rough guide in judging what share food may reasonably take from the family income, home economists have worked on a sliding scale of percentages for families of different size and income.

Take a family of four -- 2 adults doing moderately active work and a boy of 10, say, and an 8-year old girl. With a yearly income of about \$2,000, or \$40 a week, food supplies to furnish a diet acceptable from the nutritionists point of view, would take approximately 23 to 31 percent of that income. This would buy a minimum-cost or a moderate-cost diet, according to the plans suggested by the Bureau of Home Economics. Or with a weekly income of \$60 (\$3,000 a year), things



being equal, a family of four (of father, mother, and 2 children) might choose a more liberal diet, and allot 27 percent of their money to the food item in the budget. A family of the same size having a much lower income, \$1,250 a year or less, would have to spend about 37 percent or more for food to have the lowest cost diet that is fully adequate.

A family of two adults, on the other hand, at the \$2,000-a-year level, could have a moderate-cost diet by using about 16 percent of the income. Or if they have \$25 coming in each week (\$1,250 a year), they would probably need to take 19 or 26 percent of it for food, depending on whether they choose a minimum-cost or a moderate-cost diet. This would mean a total of about \$4.85 or \$6.40 for the weekly food bill.

On a \$1,000-a-year basis the family of two could get a minimum-cost diet for 24 percent of its income. Such a minimum-cost plan worked out by the food specialists, gives the cheapest combination of foods that it is desirable to use for an indefinite period. The moderate-cost plan allows for freer choice of the foods that have flavor, color, and "appetite appeal". It also allows a much wider margin of safety on the nutrition side.

In giving these percentages for the food part in the family budget, home economists caution against interpreting them too literally. Every family's budget is a special case, based on what that family wants and needs. The food bill may cover hospitality and other social obligations and satisfactions. Also, retail food prices vary with the locality, the season, and even with the stores in the same community. Percentages of income such as those given cannot be used as a precise yardstick of how much a family should spend for food. They are merely a rough guide.

Nutritionists also caution against allotting a certain amount of the family income for food and letting it go at that. Sometimes the amount of money spent for food is no index of the kind of diet the family may be getting. Food may take a large slice out of a generous family income and still not provide the foods needed for health and well-being. In other words, a family may spend enough to get a good diet, but may make such unwise selections from the standpoint of nutritive variety that the assortment of foods may not be as desirable as a less expensive one more carefully chosen.

The final test of any food budget and any diet plan is of course how it works out in meals on the table. Oftentimes, if you know your food values, it is possible to duplicate a meal plan at different cost levels. Take a dinner featuring liver, for example, a meat looked on with favor by the nutrition specialists because of its high rating in iron and vitamins. Liver of all kinds places high among the "protective" foods.

With a liberal food budget the menu might be:

- Calves liver and bacon - Relish
- French fried potatoes
- Buttered broccoli
- Dinner rolls - Butter
- Fresh fruit in season
- Spice cake

Dropping down to a more moderate-cost level, the menu might become

- Braised beef liver with gravy
- Baked potatoes or hominy
- Buttered cauliflower
- Hot biscuits - Butter
- Apple tapioca pudding with top milk

At the minimum-cost level this same general pattern might be carried out as:

- Scalloped liver and potatoes
- Quick-cooked cabbage
- Bread and butter
- Applesauce - Milk

